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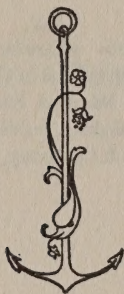
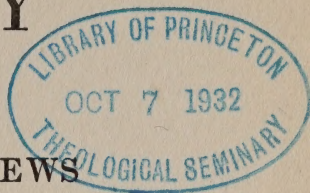
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CHRISTIANITY THE WAY

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BY
JOSEPH B. MATTHEWS



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FIRST EDITION

TO
MY WIFE

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INTRODUCTION

The most serious failure of religion is not that it lags in its intellectual adjustments to an ever-changing world-view, but that it responds with such slowness to the demand for the moral adventure—those ethical adjustments to an ever-expanding and increasingly complex social environment.

Religion must not only take account of the need of men to think their way through to the nature of Reality, but it must hold before men, with prophetic urgency, the adventure which calls them *to live their way into union with Reality*. . . .

The name of Jesus Christ signifies to an ever-increasing number of men the approach to Reality through the moral adventure. While it must never cease to busy itself with the problem of metaphysical respectability, religion ultimately will stand or fall as it succeeds or fails in realizing an order of fellowship in all the relationships of life.

Jesus intended the word Father, which he used to designate that Eternal Reality which men abstractly call God, to convey to the mind of the imaginative worshipper something of that quality of intimacy which Tennyson described as the closeness of breathing and the nearness of hands and feet. Furthermore, Jesus suggested that those who were harassed by their “intellectual” skepticism might validate his claims,

not by struggling and wrestling with elusive though logical propositions, but by launching into the moral struggle: "anyone who chooses to do his will, shall understand . . ." There can be little doubt that Jesus himself discovered the intimacy of the divine through his own moral adventure.

With that supreme confidence which comes to those who have *found*, he said, "I am the real and living way: no one comes to the Father except by means of me." Jesus is the way, not in any magical or substitutionary fashion, but as the Living Demonstration that those who follow him in the moral adventure will come to that same intimate experience of Reality.

The position amounts to what may seem like a rather fantastic suggestion that even to-day a *contribution* to the solution of the problems of penology and poverty would do more to clear up our religious problem than a course in theism. But such a thought is not far removed from Jesus' assurance that those who had busied themselves with the needs of the victims of social maladjustment would be the very ones to hear the invitation to come into the inheritance of those whom God has blessed. On the authority of Jesus we have reason to believe that some very "religious" people have a tragic surprise in store for themselves, and that some "irreligious" folk have an unexpected and unsought reward awaiting them—all because the former have accepted a cheap substitute labelled religion, and the latter, in their intellectual deficiency and moral earnestness, have stumbled upon the genuine thing.

But for our unwarranted secularization of economic, political, and social thought—whereby religion was pushed into one of life's corners to languish in moral anæmia—there would be no feeling of strangeness in such an approach to Reality. The religion of the moral adventure calls us back into the thick of human relationships with the promise that there we shall discover the Lord of the Universe in the ways of the hungry, the stranger, the sick, and the imprisoned.

In the pages that follow we have attempted to bear in mind this singular closeness of relationship between the moral adventure (which means fellowship, peace, power, love, and life) and the realization of oneness with the cosmic purpose which customarily we have called fellowship with God.

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

"I am the real and living way."

—John 14: 6

I

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

"By the fresh, living way which he has inaugurated for us."
—Hebrews 10: 20.

"It was about that time that a great commotion arose over the Way."—Acts 19: 23.

"I am the real and living way."—John 14: 6.

. It was a summer evening in New York City. The place was a modest basement restaurant operated by a Parsee from Bombay. There one may go for rice and curry served in Indian style; and surely all who have lived in that country of the Far East will agree that no other meal on earth is comparable to this. Many a time I have passed by the beautifully equipped eating places of New York and sought out this unfrequented basement room, there to live again in the experiences of six years' residence in the Malay Archipelago.

The atmosphere of India pervades the place. Dimmed lights shine out through orange-coloured shades on which are written in the beautiful characters of Sanskrit the names of the gods and goddesses that live in the hearts and the literature of the people of that mysterious land. Rama, Shiva, and Sita are

there, and others. Covering the walls and windows are large prints of distinctly Indian design.

On that summer evening there were only three of us in the restaurant. Two had been born in India—one was the Zoroastrian proprietor and the other a Hindu student from a New York university. Thus our religions were three.

As I enjoyed my rice and curry the other two engaged in a conversation that at times approached warmth. The Hindu student had surveyed the room and then—

“Why don’t you put some advertisements on your walls instead of so many pieces of cloth. Advertising is the secret of success. Local firms would pay you well to display their publicity material, and you might even advertise your own wares,” declared he whose residence in the “successful” Occident had probably been short but not altogether in vain.

“No! I’ll starve to death before I surrender my sense of beauty to the policy of cheap success,” replied the owner, and that was the end of it.

This was interesting. Rice and curry being finished, I moved over to join the discussion, all of which I had unavoidably overheard.

Our conversation soon turned upon Gandhi, as such conversations must do sooner or later, for his is one of the dynamic personalities of the age in which we live.

“Gandhi’s outlook and sympathies are narrow,”

charged the Zoroastrian somewhat to my surprise, for I had not supposed the great idol of India's millions peculiarly vulnerable at this point.

"He is careless of the effects of his non-coöperation policy upon workingmen and their families in England," he added in explanation of his criticism.

"A great deal the British have ever cared for the workingmen of India and their families!" replied the Hindu student in a vigorous defense of Gandhi.

With the strict merits of this debate I am not now concerned, but with the remarkable conclusion of the Zoroastrian.

"Well, at any rate," said he, "Gandhi is not Christian enough to suit me." Gandhi, a Hindu, not *Christ-like* enough to suit a Zoroastrian!

The next point of interest was the future of the British in India.

"The day is not far distant when we will drive the British out of India at the point of the bayonet," declared the student with his youthful patriotism.

"Are you not now forgetting Gandhi, whom you have just defended so ardently?" I ventured to inquire, remembering the Indian leader's earnest appeal to his followers that they refrain from all violence.

"In that respect I must admit that Gandhi is too much of a Christian for me," answered the student with obvious disappointment that Gandhi should pursue what seemed to him an altogether too idealistic

course in his attempt to free India. Gandhi, a Hindu, too *Christlike* to suit a fellow Hindu!

Representatives of three great religions, we stood naturally and earnestly in the presence of the inescapable Christ and brought to him for their testing the gravest problems of this generation. It was a literal fulfillment of Whittier's lines:

"O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine."

THE WAY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The mystically minded of many religions have likened the religious life to a journey and themselves to travellers upon a way that leads to the goal of supreme desire. Buddhism has its Noble Eight-fold Path that leads to Nirvana. The Sufis of Islam by many and arduous stages follow the *way* that ends in mystic union with the divine. The disciples of Ram-anuja in India have their three-fold way (*marga*) by which they enter into that One Reality which is Brahma. Tao in China is the Religion of the Way—that Cosmic Principle, complete harmony with which is the goal of all good living.

In Christianity's Mystical Gospel, Jesus is called the Real and Living Way without whom no man comes to the Father. Mysticism, with its eyes fixed

upon the goal of a Blessed Union, has too often forgotten the Way. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that in Christianity, at least, the Way is ethical—ethical in the highest sense, because personal: *I am the Way*. Character is fundamental. *It is the genius of the Christian message that mysticism and the moral adventure are inseparably bound together.*

The problem of avoiding the legalism of a set of rules on the one hand, and the unproductive emotionalism of mysticism on the other hand, is ever present. The ethical demands of Christianity are vitalized because revealed in an historic person, rather than legalized by some official enactment.

In its incipency, then, Christianity, like many other religions, was a Way. But that Way was a Person. The teachings of Jesus, to be most effective, can never be considered apart from the Teacher; Teacher and Teaching are one. Christianity offers, in its New Testament, not a manual of doctrine but a story of life. To be sure, not a formal biography but a fragmentary "heroic literature" whereby those who approach it with the desire to be and to do, rather than to talk about it, may find their inspiration, not in the guise of "isms" or "anities" but in the form of a Man.

There is an eternal freshness in this very personal quality of the Way. Doctrines grow old; creeds become obsolete; nicely conceived utopias fail to materialize; and emotional hopes are followed by disillusion.

sionment. Personality alone transcends spatial and temporal limitations. Thus it is that Christianity, seeking its renewal, has always turned, when it did not fail in the quest, to its central Person. He is always its approach to contemporary reality—the real and living Way.

The Christianity of Acts was also known as “the Way” (Acts 9:2; 19:9; 19:23; 22:4; 24:14; 24:22). Paul declared: “After the Way, which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers.” (R. V.)

THE SUPREME TEST

It is clear in the New Testament that there is something normative about the Way of Jesus. It would be a strange thing, would it not, if in the New Testament, and more especially in the words of Jesus himself, there were not clear indications of what it means to be one of his disciples.

In the Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount we have a description of the character of those who qualify for the new order which Jesus inaugurated. We are shown in the Beatitudes a composite portrait of one who, in spite of all the circumstances that seem to militate against God’s Reign of Righteousness, is eligible to its happiness. This is a hard test indeed, but there never was any foundation for the assumption that to be a Christian is an easy matter.

Jesus repeatedly made clear that discipleship was

not simply a relationship between the disciple and himself, but with equal force involved the disciple's relationships with his fellowmen everywhere. When Zacchæus announced his intention of righting to the best of his ability the wrongs which he had committed against his fellows, Jesus declared that salvation had come to his house. In painting a picture of the last judgment Jesus declared that genuine interest in the underprivileged and socially stigmatized was the best expression of discipleship. It was the one test that he set forth on that occasion when he was dealing explicitly with the question of *final* tests. Both those who passed his test of discipleship and those who failed to pass it called him "Lord" in his parable, and the inference is that they had always been correct in their form of address. The two groups differed not in their verbal Christology but in their social-mindedness. The clear implication of this parable of the judgment and other sayings is that soundness of Christology is not to be determined by verbal formulas but by Christlike attitudes toward men. On another occasion Jesus definitely stated that one did not qualify for admission to the Kingdom simply by *calling* him Lord, but by doing the will of his Father.

We have in these words of the Gospels no legal formula for passing upon a man's discipleship, but the general nature of Christian character is made quite plain. The case is the same with the other parts

of the New Testament. "Anyone who does not possess the Spirit of Christ," wrote Paul, "does not belong to him."

This Spirit of Christ, according to Paul, constitutes the test of a man's discipleship. How strange that the followers of Jesus should have imposed so many other tests. The statements of theology *have* changed and *will* change with the changes of philosophy and science, but the Spirit of Christ can be made neither untrue nor obsolete by anything that might be discovered in a laboratory. The Way of Jesus is a changeless test because the Spirit of Christ has become a timeless fact in human experience.

The tragic thing about ecclesiastically imposed tests is that a man may pass them satisfactorily and still be leagues removed from what the New Testament understands by a disciple of Jesus.

THE CHRISTIANITY COMPLEX

The word *complex* has been defined as "organized tendencies or sentiments which are in some degree confused, morbid, and abnormal." In describing what he calls the "gnostic complex" of the early centuries of our era, Rufus Jones says that complexes are "usually found in individuals, but here in these movements we are confronted with social waves, or tides, or drifts of morbid and unbalanced sentiments which were more or less 'contagious.'"

If Christianity, etymologically and historically, means that Christ is in some way *central* in thinking and living, then the development of a *Christianity Complex* in thought and life is to be halted only by an insistent reference of all things to him as the religious norm.

The failure so to relate all things to the central figure of faith has resulted in the development of a variety of Christianity complexes. Men are still caught in the sweep of social waves, or drifts of morbid and unbalanced sentiments. One after another such sentiments are taken up and organized into the total mass called Christianity with no thought of a coherent system around a central Christ. It is this fact that led a prominent Hindu to say to Professor Buck recently: "We will take the *Christ* of your Christianity, and you may keep the *-ianity*." Your Christ, but not your Complex!

Only on the basis of a well-developed complex can we explain a system whose central figure said, "Love your enemies," and whose adherents betimes cultivate the most bitter hatreds with remorseless thoroughness. Not long ago many of us were caught in the sweep of war passions, and with little difficulty, if not with crusading eagerness, we admitted them into our Christianity Complex. We imagined, as some one has said, that Jesus was standing behind us patting us on the back. Not until the disillusionments of the Peace Conference, and the revelations of Allied diplomatic

machinations, and the exposure of war's criminal futility, did we come to understand how sadly blurred was our understanding of Jesus and his way of life. Even then it was the failure of the extraneous element of our complex, and not a new will to test our lives by his, that led us back to the Galilean who reserved the highest of all dignities for the peacemakers—"they shall be called the sons of God."

Men have been known to claim divine sanction for their economic theories, having convinced themselves that they are integral parts of Christianity. In the tide of material prosperity men begin to see Jesus as an advertising genius and the founder of modern business. A well-known economist declares that "every essential feature of the modern economic system is explicitly set forth in the teachings of this young Jew (Jesus), who hoped that his own people might profit by them and become a great and free people." When the Christianity Complex takes this form much of our real devotion is directed toward the Great God Status Quo. Profits and property become preëminently sacred; and any proposed readjustments in the economic order are met with the cry of "Russia!"—*Russia* meaning approximately what Luther tried to hit with an ink bottle.

We have not even outgrown the custom of organizing our *ignorance* into our Christianity Complex. Through history there is the sadly recurring phenom-

enon of persecution, in Christ's name, of the world's greatest scientific benefactors. Galileo was made to recant, and Copernicus was called an upstart astrol-
oger, not because their work was tested by essential Christianity as their opponents vainly imagined, but because it was tested by childish preconceptions which were declared to be part and parcel of Christianity itself. Jesus never hesitated to set aside whatever stood in the way of progress. He was unafraid of the most revolutionary truth, knowing that it can only strike the shackles from our imprisoned minds and set us free.

Few things have assisted more in the development of a dangerous Christianity Complex than an *undiscriminating* acceptance of the Bible as authoritative. Men tortured and put to death thousands of poor old women because the Bible said, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." The wars of Christendom have been supported by appeal to the conduct of men who worshipped a tribal, vindictive deity in pre-Christian centuries. An eminent theologian of the Christian Church went so far as to say that the example of David in hating his enemies had been set before us by the Holy Spirit for our imitation.

But, in spite of the discouraging prevalence of our Christianity Complex, there is hope. Not a few are seriously committed to the attempt to *Christianize* Christianity. There is a new will in many quarters, nowhere more sincere than among his youthful fol-

lowers, to make Jesus' way of life normative in Christianity.

To break down the complex and liberate the true Christ spirit of Christianity is the only hopeful course now open to his followers. Without it who can justify for a minute the missionary enterprise, to say nothing of the expenditures for the maintenance of the churches in Christendom?

"THE INESCAPABLE CHRIST"

"No man, no nation, and no church," writes Bowie, "can defy the ultimate authority of those realities of the spirit which Jesus has revealed." Were ever truer words uttered than those of Simeon in the Temple? "This child is destined for the downfall as well as the rise of many a one in Israel; destined to be a Sign for man's attack—to bring out the secret aims of many a heart." And not only in Israel, but increasingly in all the world! Men and nations stand or fall as they relate themselves to Jesus and his way of life; and the secret aims of many a heart have stood revealed by the attitude toward him. Therefore the most important question for church, nation, or man is this: Have you reckoned with Christ? Against the background of his achievement our failures loom large and challenging. By thus revealing our sin he takes the first step in fulfilling his mission of Saviourhood. The second step,

repentance, we alone can take; and upon that step God himself must wait.

“To-day, as never before,” writes Professor Scott, “Jesus stands out as the moral leader of humanity. The principles which he laid down have been vindicated through the bitter experiences of the last few years, and men of all opinions are now agreed that the society of the future can be built on no other foundations.”

“Loyalty to Jesus,” says Henry Sloane Coffin, “compels us to begin with him. If he is the Way we are not justified in taking half a dozen other roads, and using him as one path among many.” These other roads invariably turn out to be blind alleys or else descends into the mire of confusion and strife. Eventually we must take his Way or lose the way.

CHAPTER II

THE WAY OF FELLOWSHIP WITH MEN

"He appointed twelve to be with him."

—Mark 3: 14.

II

THE WAY OF FELLOWSHIP WITH MEN

"The heart of friendship and the heart of the Incarnation," says Professor Glover, "are in essence the same thing—giving oneself in frankness and love to him who will accept, and by them winning him who refuses."¹

The friendships of Jesus—how rich, how wide, how beautiful! He appears to have been ever eager to establish contacts with men. There was nothing of the recluse in him. Whenever men have walked the way of monasticism they have not done so in obedience to the example of Jesus. Even Muhammad understood this when he wrote in the Koran concerning Christians: "We (God) put into the hearts of those who followed him (Jesus) kindness and compassion: but as to the monastic life, they invented it themselves."² His was a truer insight into the meaning of Christianity than the Church itself has had at times. To Jesus, life meant fellowship with men. He chose the twelve not only that he might commission them but "that they might be with him."³

¹Glover: *The Jesus of History*, p. 138.

²Sura 57: 27: Rodwell's *Koran*, p. 409f.

³Mark 3: 14. (R. V.)

Jesus believed in fellowship with men ; and William James used to say that a belief discharges itself in a deed. Such at least was the kind of belief in fellowship that Jesus possessed. That which discharges itself in mere talk is on no higher plane than opinion.

FELLOWSHIP WITHOUT FRONTIERS

Jesus found the society of his day divided by many barriers ; men had fenced themselves off from their fellows by numerous prejudices, but he refused to be restricted by them. In his fellowship with men there were no frontiers. Rich and poor, high and low, respectable and outcast, religious and irreligious, Jew and Gentile, ruler and subject, man and woman, adult and child—all came within the wide reach of his friendly soul, sometimes to the dismay of those who boasted of their superiority. He recognized only the aristocracy of the soul, and every man was a candidate for that. A man would be helped to achieve it by the fellowship of one who possessed nobility of heart.

The respectable people of Jewish society avoided tax-gatherers and sinners. Association with them was believed to be contaminating, but Jesus sought them out and was "accused" of being their friend. When he went home with Zacchæus it is reported that "everyone began to mutter that he had gone to be the guest of a sinner." Did Jesus know the popular feeling toward tax-gatherers and sinners? Yes, but

his way of fellowship with men ran straight across that prejudice. It was a serious breach, but Zacchæus was more than a tax-gatherer and sinner; he was a man, and Jesus sought fellowship with men.

Palestine was seething with the spirit of revolt against Rome and the Messiah was expected to deliver the country from the Roman yoke. Jesus knew this, but he also knew that armed revolt, though the patriot of every generation and nation could have justified it, would not settle the problems of his people. He announced the novel idea that every enemy was a potential friend. There was only one way to convert him from enmity to friendship, and that was the way of aggressive goodwill. That was likewise the only way to conserve all the human values involved on both sides. "Whoever forces you to go one mile, go two miles with him." The law of retaliation was rejected and the law of fellowship between members of hostile nations was put in its place.

Jesus lived in an atmosphere of race prejudice as great as that in which any man lives to-day. For the orthodox Jew of his day there were two classes of human beings in the world: Jews and Gentiles; and the latter were "dogs." On one occasion Jesus met a Syro-Phœnician woman who begged for help. His disciples would have sent her away; and Jesus might have granted her request immediately but he seized the opportunity to expose the miserable Jewish prejudice toward Gentiles. "He said to her, 'Let the

children be satisfied first of all; it is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.' " When he spoke to her thus, there must have been something in his facial expression and something in his tone of voice which indicated with perfect clearness that his words were only an exposure of the current Jewish prejudice and not an acceptance of their prejudice that the Gentiles were "dogs." At least the woman understood him and was not rebuffed; instead she responded with keen appreciation of the situation: "No, sir, but under the table the dogs do pick up the children's crumbs." If any man could show us that the contacts of Jesus were in any degree controlled by the current prejudices which divided men, then, as John A. Hutton says, "I should have to close my New Testament and go out into the darkness." But no, Jesus utterly rejected the racial prejudices of his day. Paul was interpreting him perfectly when he declared, "There is no room for Jew or Greek . . . you are all one in Christ Jesus." The ancient chasm of race was spanned by the way of fellowship in which Jesus walked.

The Jewish world in which Jesus lived assumed without question the universal belief in the inferiority of woman. And yet we find Jesus completely transcending that conception in his contacts and conversations with women. This aspect of his life is without a parallel among the religious leaders of ancient times,

and only in modern times are we beginning to catch up with him in Christendom. He never "talked down" to the women he met. He spoke to the woman of Samaria as he might have spoken to St. John. Nor were his conversations with women mere "masculine monologues punctuated by feminine assent." There was a fellowship of minds on a plane of equality and mutual respect. The result was that out of his conversations with women came some of his profoundest utterances. To Martha he said: "I am myself resurrection and life." And to the Samaritan woman he declared: "God is Spirit, and his worshippers must worship him in Spirit and in reality." But so truly did his disciples share the current attitudes toward women that they "marvelled that he was speaking with a woman" when they returned and found him engaged in conversation with the woman at the well. Men and women were not only separated by the male superiority complex but by double standards of morality, and these, too, Jesus brought crashing to the ground. He bridged the chasm between the sexes with his way of fellowship.

Jesus came into a world that was altogether an adult world—a world in which it was presumptuous to ask a busy man to take any notice of children. But he was so tenderly human that he could stop in the midst of a discourse and "put his arms round them." His fellowship included them. He was protesting for

himself as much as for them, and it was no feeble protest according to the record, when he said: "Let the children come to me, do not stop them." Miller has given us in his lines the picture of how he

"Held them close to His heart and caress'd them,
Put His face down to theirs as in prayer,
Put their hands to His neck, and so bless'd them
With baby hands hid in His hair."

Jesus walked the way of fellowship with men because he was normally human in all that pertains to our essential humanity. During the final week of his ministry when he stood within the shadow of the cross, it is recorded that he went out of the city to spend the night with his friends at Bethany. What a normal development we note between the boy of twelve and the mature man reflected in that part of the record! At twelve it was difficult to take him away from the temple. In the temple centred the wonderful traditions of his people, about which he had heard so much in the village of Nazareth. Undoubtedly the same problems of later years were present also, but the boy of twelve was not conscious of them. But, for the man of Passion Week, Jerusalem and the temple stood for heart-breaking problems. Just outside the city was little Bethany and it stood for friendships. In Jerusalem there was stern business; in Bethany there were sustaining friendships; so Jesus went to Bethany at evening time.

PERSONALITY AS AN END IN RELIGION

Not only is fellowship the normal giving of oneself to others in frankness and love and the most effective method of winning men to loyalty for a great cause—both of which are so clearly revealed in the life of Jesus—but according to the New Testament it is fundamental in religion. It is so important that one cannot claim to love God while not living on a fellowship basis with men,⁴ so important that if one would worship God by bringing a gift to the altar he must first go and adjust his relationships with men on a fellowship basis, then come back and offer his gift;⁵ so important that one receives forgiveness from God only as one lives forgiveness toward men;⁶ so important that a ministry of fellowship to those in need is called a ministry to Christ himself.⁷

The idea of the supreme worth and sacredness of human personality pervaded the relationships of Jesus with men. Every man bore the divine image in his personality, no matter how badly marred by sin. Kant was not giving us anything new when he said, "Treat no man as a means, but every man as an end in himself." It was the way of Jesus long before. It was the principle that Jesus expressed in connection

⁴I John 4:20.

⁵Matthew 5:23f.

⁶Matthew 6:14f.

⁷Matthew 25:40.

with the sabbath controversy, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath." Man is the end; the sabbath is only a means. But the Jews were living in a topsy-turvy world of their own making, in which the sabbath had come to be an end in itself and man only a means for its observance. Jesus' principle had an application much wider than the sabbath. It covered all human institutions. He was indignant at the exploitation of personality for the purpose of gain. Property was made for man, and not man for property.

FELLOWSHIP OR CONFLICT

Testing ourselves by the Way of Jesus, which was the Way of Fellowship, we find that we live in a world organized on a conflict basis. Never before were there so many points of conflict, and never before were we so painfully aware of them. This is not a reason for despair; it constitutes the most stirring challenge ever faced by a generation of the followers of Jesus. We are challenged to achieve a world order based not upon conflict but upon coöperation and mutuality in all good things. To do this we must break down barriers which have stood for millenniums, dividing the human family into warring factions. Can we face all the hard facts of these divisions, blinking nothing, and in the face of them persist in our aim for a universal fellowship?

Mere discussion of these vexing problems often

brings ridicule upon one, and the faithful handling of them in one's own life brings the charge that one is radical. But other Christians, many centuries ago, were charged with "turning the world upside down." In trying to abolish treason to the human race men have been called traitors. To work for and live fellowship means that one is consistently and loyally pro-human. And to be pro-human still brings upon one the charge of being pro-devil (as it did for Jesus) or pro-Bolshevik which is the modern popular equivalent for pro-devil.

Most of us are agreed that the worth of human personality as an end in itself seems to have been fundamental in the attitudes of Jesus. Nevertheless, a lady was heard to remark recently, "To recognize the personal worth of a Negro would be to open the doors of amalgamation of the races and the breakdown of our civilization." There are two observations on such an assertion: the amalgamation that has taken place thus far, and there is much of it, may be charged almost entirely to the *failure* to recognize the worth of human personality in the womanhood of coloured races; and again, if our civilization is built upon an attitude that refuses to recognize the personal worth of every man, woman, and child, then our civilization is already doomed, for, when tested by the Way of Jesus, it fails and must perish.

No one who knows the situation could fail to be grateful for the progress that is being made in the

relationships of the races, but there is still much hard work to be done before we can call those relationships Christian. It is a time for consecration rather than congratulation. Race prejudice scales upward from the low forms of lynching and barbarous convict-beating to those refined attitudes of condescension which do not tear the flesh but leave their scars upon the souls of men, especially upon the souls of those who indulge the attitudes.

To follow the Way of Jesus in industry will mean that nowhere in the wide world will any man exploit the life of any other man. Would brother exploit brother in the same family? Are quantity, efficiency and economy of production to be the criteria of success and prosperity in an industry? or is the human product of industry the final test? Is it the potter or the vessel that is being moulded with eternal consequences?

How does industry in China meet the testing by the Way of Jesus? Study this picture: "Each evening along the streets near the mills in Shanghai two long processions move, the women and the children on their way to the mills, and the women and the children on their way home. It is a tragic company, for the mills run night and day, week-day and Sunday, in two long twelve-hour shifts. Children of eight and ten are trudging along with their rice bowls in their hands, and many of the women with them tramp stiffly on their bound and hampered feet. All day and

all night long the women sit by the looms and the children stand before the spindles—little wizened creatures, the threads of whose frail lives are being spun into the cotton, and the guilt of their blood pressed out into the cloth.”⁸

In the United States in 1920 there were 185,337 child labourers in our factories, and an investigation in New York City found even three-year-old babies toiling with their tiny hands making paper flowers, working long hours in dark, unventilated rooms of tenement houses.

If Jesus were here to-day he would feel an unpleasant, scratchy sensation in some of our softest wearing apparel. Some of our sweetest foods that come to us from the toil of little children would be bitter to him. The warmth of our homes, made comfortable by the heat from coal that has been sorted by tender bleeding hands, would kindle such a blaze in his soul that you would hear him say: “It were better for an industry that a mill-stone were hanged about its neck, and that it were drowned in the depth of the sea, than that it should offend one of these little ones.”

Even so, his words are to-day the dynamite that is blasting at the foundations of those institutions which are built upon greed, oppression and the debauchery of human personality.

When much of the discussion that has taken place

⁸Robert E. Speer.

within the Christian Church is tested by the way of fellowship, it falls short. "In any discussion within the Church as to the form of her faith, the most important thing of all to preserve is the spirit of fellowship. When that is lost all verbal victories are pyrrhic victories—they convince nobody and leave the situation not better but worse."⁹

This striking sentence appears in the Koran: "But the Sects have fallen to variance among themselves about Jesus."¹⁰ Though written many centuries ago, how appropriate yet!

Consider the words of the Moslem princess of Java, Raden Adjeng Kartini: "Religion is intended as a blessing to mankind—a bond between all the creatures of God. They should be brothers and sisters, not because they have the same human parents, but because they are all children of one Father, of Him who is enthroned in the heavens above. Brothers and sisters must love one another, help, strengthen and support one another. O God! sometimes I wish that there had never been a religion, because that which should unite mankind into one common brotherhood has been through all the ages a cause of strife, of discord, and of bloodshed. . . . Religion, which is meant to save us from our sins, how many sins are committed in thy name?"¹¹

⁹W. Cosby Bell: *Sharing in Creation*, p. 58.

¹⁰Sura 19:38; Rodwell's *Koran*, p. 120.

¹¹Raden Adjeng Kartini: *Letters of a Javanese Princess*, p. 21.

Let us have frankness in discussion, fairness when we differ, and above all things fellowship that becomes the family of God.

WORKING WITH, NOT FOR

The strongest bond of fellowship between individuals or groups is that which is forged by coöperation in a worthy undertaking. Labour working *for* capital and capital working *for* itself will not stand the test of the future; but labour and capital working together to supply the needs of humanity will provide the only possible basis of fellowship between those who own the tools of production and those who produce with the tools. It may be that far-reaching changes in the economic order must be effected before genuine coöperation can exist; if so, nothing could be more dangerous for us than to assume that the present order is final and not subject to revision or criticism. Only that will stand which successfully meets the testing of the Way of Jesus.

The fellowship which will permanently unite the peoples of the world will not come as our missionaries work *for* the Chinese and the Africans but *with* them in establishing the reign of righteousness on Earth. In the true fellowship of races there can be no "white man's burden."

The intimate fellowship between Jesus and his disciples was based not only upon mutual respect but

upon a partnership in a common task. "Go . . . and I will be with you." In those moments of intimacy before the end, Jesus declared that the relationship between himself and his disciples was not that of master and servant, but that of friend and friend. Thus alone may we hope to achieve the widest and strongest fellowships between the different groups in Christianity. "It is not so much in our creeds as in our activities that we get together," writes Dr. James I. Vance in a recent volume.

FELLOWSHIP A SPIRITUAL FACT

If we are really trying to understand Jesus' viewpoint we must admit that much that has been said so far merely touches the surface of his passionate devotion to the interests of humanity. Do we understand Jesus if we think that his ministry to the needs of humanity means no more than the establishment of proper international agencies for the elimination of war? Do we understand Jesus if we suppose that his demands go no farther than making wealth the servant rather than the master of humanity? That is necessary from his viewpoint, but it may be superficial. One can only partly imagine his indictment of a system of industry that robs and debauches childhood, but Jesus does not stop with adequate child labour laws. No, Jesus was not *superficial*; and this is where he parts company with many social theories

that look to proper social and economic adjustments for the solution of all humanity's ills.

No one would be quicker than Jesus to recognize that a man may be surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries of modern civilization, and still live in a veritable hell on earth. No one would be quicker to recognize that a child may live in a palace on Fifth Avenue with all of the *things* and *attentions* that wealth can bestow, and still be as homeless as any urchin upon the streets of the east side.

Jesus went much deeper to the heart of humanity's needs. His aims for man rise to such unwonted heights because they were so free from the materialistic view of life. His program demands all that can reasonably be asked for the economic, social and political welfare of man, but it also demands repentance—an inner change of attitude toward life and its meaning. "Repent, the Reign of heaven is near," was an essential note of his ministry. "You must all be born from above," suggests the extent of the spiritual revolution that is ordinarily required of a man in order to be a citizen in the kingdom of fellowship. External adjustments must be the expressions of inner fellowship; machinery and devices alone are not enough. Fellowship rests upon mutual and noble achievements of mind, heart, soul and character. Nothing short of this can represent Jesus' interest in men.

In a world of men whose future is threatened by economic rivalries, the clash of social classes, inter-

national warfare, inter-racial hatreds, and religious animosities, where shall we turn for the healing word of fellowship? Is it not alone to the One who "lived and moved and had his being" in the spirit of fellowship? In our extremity he says to us again, "I am the real and living Way."

CHAPTER III

THE WAY OF PEACE

"Blessed are the peacemakers."

—Matthew 5:9

III

THE WAY OF PEACE

Peace was very definitely associated with the coming of Jesus. "Peace on earth," sang the angels at his birth. "My peace I give to you," was his parting promise. Peter declared that God had "preached the Gospel of peace by Jesus Christ."

DIVINE APPROVAL

Let us look for a moment at the words of the angelic announcement: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

But this rendering no longer appears in our best revisions and translations. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," is one of the many passages which have been materially affected by these revisions. Turn to the American Standard Version (Luke 2:14) and you will read: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased."

This revised reading is supported by the most reliable ancient sources. The difference in the two translations is at once apparent. "On earth peace, good will toward men" sounds like a gift from above without *ethical qualifications*. While "on earth peace

among men in whom he is well pleased" clearly defines the path along which we are to journey in the achievement of peace. Peace to whom? Not to all men indiscriminately! But peace to those whose way of living has the divine endorsement! And that is an ethical achievement on the part of man.

What are the characteristics of that way of life in which God is well pleased? Is not unselfishness one such characteristic? It will be readily admitted that selfishness is not the soil in which to grow peace. It is rather the soil in which spring up the obnoxious weeds of international strife. As certainly as no man was ever pleasing to God in selfishness, with equal certainty was never peace of any kind achieved therewith. But unselfishness is a negative statement of a thing that is splendidly positive.

Good will is one of the positive statements of the same thing. The Latin version of the Bible gave a good translation of the angel song. It read: "Peace on earth to men of good will." Good will is a weapon that subdues more effectively than sword or gun. We all very likely believe that. But how many of us can go farther and say that good will is the *only* weapon which subdues and establishes peace? But so runs the promise: "Peace on earth to men of good will!" Not peace on earth to men who are armed with six-shooters! Not peace on earth to a nation that spends more than eighty per cent of its national budget for military purposes!

The Boxer uprising in China cost the lives of many foreigners in that country. The Powers, including Great Britain, Germany, France and the United States were awarded indemnities in the settlement. Our government chose to turn its share of indemnity into a kind of good will fund for the education of Chinese youths who should be sent to this country in the future. It was an investment in an enterprise of good will, and did vastly more to establish perpetual peace between China and the United States than ten times that sum, yes, a thousand times that sum spent on armaments could ever do.

In 1915 our government sent an Expedition to the Mexican border at an expense many times greater than the China "good will" money. Presumably it was supposed that our camping along the border for several months would prove to be a very effective gesture consonant with our national dignity which Mexico had insulted. What did we accomplish with that vast outlay of money? Nothing of a constructive nature! Only good will among the nations ever serves the cause of peace. Peace on earth to nations of good will!

"BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS"

It is claimed that Jesus sanctioned the use of physical force by driving the traders from the temple. A second thought on this incident will show that if Jesus had been relying on mere physical force he

would have had no chance against the overwhelming superiority of numbers. Rather was it the force of a righteous personality against the weakness of men whose consciences told them they were in the wrong. Jesus' teaching has been mistakenly called "non-resistance": it was "super-resistance." He believed in a world of spiritual forces. Our difficulty lies just here: we do not believe in that world. For many of us so-called physical facts represent the only plane of reality. To Jesus spiritual facts were equally real and far more powerful in accomplishing a worthy end.

Jesus expected the citizens of his kingdom to be peacemakers. It is worthy of notice that in this rôle he assigns to them the highest of all dignities. "Blessed are the peacemakers! they will be ranked sons of God." As one strives for peace it is especially evident that he belongs to the family of God. But what is a peacemaker?

The true peacemaker is anything but *passive*. He believes in waging peace with an even greater daring, enthusiasm, and sacrifice than men exhibit in waging war. He believes in substituting law courts and legislative bodies for the methods of destruction which are inevitably involved in war. He believes in appropriations for peace purposes that would equal what men have wasted in war.

The true peacemaker is anything but a coward. He is willing to risk everything of personal comfort

and physical safety for the great goal of a warless world. This was in reality the spirit that animated the men who flocked to the colours in 1917. But many of these same men have learned that the method then used was an impossible one for achieving the purpose that fired them. In recent discussions of war and peace the war system has never been so emphatically challenged as by the men who know war firsthand. These men say that to stand in the face of public scorn and ridicule on the proposition that Jesus' way of life will work between men and nations requires more courage than to "go over the top."

The true peacemaker believes in protection. He would not desert womanhood, home, country, democratic institutions and hard-won achievements to the malignant and destructive forces of our world. But of all such hell-born forces that would destroy the things we cherish, the peacemaker sees war as the most sinister. War is pseudo-protection. A poet went through the World War believing in war as a method of protection but came out at the end saying:

"Waste of muscle, waste of brain,
Waste of patience, waste of pain,
Waste of manhood, waste of health,
Waste of beauty, waste of wealth,
Waste of blood, waste of tears,
Waste of youth's most precious years,
Waste of ways the saints have trod,
Waste of glory, waste of God—
War."

The true peacemaker is not content to deal in generalities. He finds that for centuries the Christian people of the world have opposed all wars in general while they were yet afar off, but have supported all wars in particular as they have arrived. He is not content to pass resolutions of a general nature on the unchristian character of war, but begins at once to oppose the war institution in its peace-time phases. He joins hands with increasing thousands all over the world who have set themselves against the military mind.

The true peacemaker is anything but a blind enthusiast. The charge of blindness may be brought against the militarist and the statesman who stumble into the pit of modern war, but it cannot be successfully urged against the peacemaker. He believes in the most scientific investigation of the causes of war and the application of all possible scientific remedies. He is too scientific to be swept off his feet by the lying propaganda which so naïvely simplifies the origins of wars by charging them to the beastly wickedness of the enemy across the line. The blind enthusiast is the man who marches just because the drums begin to beat; not so the peacemaker.

The true peacemaker is anything but a traitor. He holds that loyalty to the Spirit of Jesus is the highest of all loyalties and only that is treason which violates this supreme loyalty. He believes that Jesus

was the truest patriot Palestine ever had, even though he did not advocate armed revolt against Rome.

The true peacemaker is an adventurer. He believes with President Coolidge that "Peace is an adventure of faith." He is not content that the human race shall go on in its old rut of wars and peace forever alternating. He believes that what ought to be can be and ventures forth to realize it.

The true peacemaker is an unqualified Christian. He is weary of the declaration that "war is unchristian, but——" He believes that spiritual power is available in full measure only for those who take the way of Jesus without qualifications.

JESUS OR BARABBAS

The war issue was uppermost at the most crucial moment in the career of Jesus. On that memorable day the populace was given its choice between Jesus and Barabbas. We used to think that Barabbas was just a plain, ordinary thief, and were at a loss to understand the degenerate nature of the mob that cried out for his release and the crucifixion of Jesus. One of the gospels does call Barabbas a "robber," but the gospel of Mark says that Barabbas was "lying bound with them that had made insurrection, men who in the insurrection had committed murder." That makes the whole situation perfectly clear. This

man Barabbas was a patriot who had risked his red blood for the people in an attempt to drive out the foreign invader. Of course, the mob cried out for his release. He stood for the things for which they stood. But this Jesus was different! His proposal was good will, love and brotherhood. Folks laughed at it in the first century and cried out that the author of this stupid proposal should be crucified, and so he was. They were not ready for his proposal.

If any "patriot" ever had a clear case, Barabbas had one. The Romans were invaders and conquerors in Palestine. Pompey, the Roman general, had seized the land in 63 B. C., under circumstances that amounted to bald treachery. Prior to that the Jews had known more than a century of independence under the Maccabees and their successors. No wonder that many were restless under the Roman rule in the days of Jesus. Every familiar brand of patriotism would have said that the Jews should defend the freedom of their homes by arms, no matter how great the forces pitted against them. To this end insurrections were frequent and eventually they led to the utter destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A. D. But so far as Jesus was concerned, national honour did not call for insurrection; rather did the higher patriotism demand the mightier weapons of the spirit.

With the rise of Nationalism as a religion, which

has well-nigh supplanted its Christian rival in the field of international relations, there is little doubt about the outcome of a modern contest between Jesus and Barabbas. Indeed, the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of Barabbas have met in modern times and will meet again. Up to the present moment the contest has been extremely one-sided. Nationalism is supreme; and the Nationalist mind simply cannot grasp the higher patriotism for which Jesus stood.

OUR DISILLUSIONMENT

We have this advantage over previous generations: We understand war's futility as no previous generation could have understood it, and we are disillusioned about some things which were once believed to guarantee peace for the world.

We no longer cherish a child-like faith in the power of commerce to bind the nations together in a bond of peace. The more we know of war in the modern world the more clearly do we perceive that its roots are almost always economic roots. With the ever-increasing industrialization of the world we are increasing the possibilities of conflict. Modern industry requires certain raw materials such as oil, rubber, coal and iron which are not evenly distributed over the world. The struggle for the control of these raw materials easily leads to armed conflict. Almost all modern wars have important economic roots. It was

true of the World War. Whatever we may do to maintain political isolation, we have passed the point in history when economic isolation was possible for us. Our economic entanglements have possibilities for conflict that many political alliances such as the League of Nations could not produce. We have learned that we may be very commercial and not very peaceful.

We no longer have a child-like faith in the power of armaments to ensure peace by the preparedness route. Armaments are productive of fear and nervousness and these do not make for calmness in crises. We have learned that we may be very much prepared and not very peaceful.

We no longer believe as we did once that science with its startling discoveries will of itself open the way to perpetual peace. We have learned that science is no conscientious objector to war and that it offers its services for the invention of the deadliest weapons ever employed for purposes of destruction. We have learned that we may be very scientific and not very peaceful.

Some of us no longer cherish a child-like faith in the power of a certain type of religion to establish peace and righteousness on earth. Religion which concerns itself with supra-mundane experience stands impotent in the presence of an international crisis. Millions of good people in all the civilized countries of the world were saying their prayers night and

morning when the world slipped over the brink of war's abyss, but they were not waging peace. We have learned that we may be very religious and not very peaceful.

But with all this disillusionment there has come a deepening of the conviction that the Way of Jesus has meaning for the peace of the world. This conviction is shared by men outside the Christian Church. Bernard Shaw says, "the only man who came out of the war with an enhanced reputation for common sense was Jesus Christ."¹

CONFLICT THAT IS CREATIVE

There are two sayings of Jesus which, on the surface, seem to present an irreconcilable contradiction.

When Peter drew his sword in defense of his Lord and smote off the ear of the servant of the High Priest, Jesus rebuked him, saying: "All they that draw the sword shall perish by the sword."

On another occasion, when he was speaking about discipleship, Jesus said: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."

A little examination will show that there is no contradiction whatever in these two sayings. Jesus is speaking of two distinct types of conflict—*destructive* and *creative*. In the first situation it was a literal

¹Gilkey: *Jesus and Our Generation*, p. 23.

sword that Peter drew. When Jesus rebuked him saying, "All they that draw the sword shall perish by the sword," he was pointing out the futility of destructive conflict. He said that destructive strife is a boomerang which turns upon the apparent victor to his undoing.

But in the other situation it was no literal sword about which he was speaking. "I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Surely no one could think that Jesus believed his work would result in bringing a literal sword into the closest family relationships. He is here using the sword as a brilliant metaphor to emphasize the clear-cut character of the ideas he was launching in the world, and warning his followers that the price of discipleship would sometimes be disagreement with those nearest them in the ties of blood. In that terrible eventuality he was asking nothing less than supreme loyalty to himself. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

"I came not to send peace, but a sword." Jesus evidently foresaw that some would try to make of his followers a great Society of Straddlers, lovers of *moral ambiguities*. Peace which is bought at the price of silence when the time has come to speak is not

the kind of peace which Jesus sought. Harmony which two individuals achieve through a total absence of ideas on important questions is a social possession of questionable value. *All worth-while ideas will somewhere mean cleavage.* Within certain limits *agreement* has value and makes for stability in society, but go beyond those limits and agreement means stagnation and the end of progress. Clearness of moral discernment is indispensable in the life of religion.

When we speak of moral discernment, we are not thinking of a realm of abstract ideas. That is intellectualism. We are thinking of the moral adventure which is inseparable from true religion. Men have often constructed *religions* as substitutes for the *moral adventure*. That was the situation in Israel in the eighth century when Amos appeared in Bethel. He called upon men to abandon their morally meaningless religion of sacrifice, incense-burning, sabbath observing and psalm singing, and to enter upon the religion of the moral adventure: "Let justice roll down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Many so-called modernists and many so-called fundamentalists are in the same boat—the boat of intellectualism. The modernist may be sitting in the prow of the boat, but what matters his "advanced position" since his fundamentalist fellow-voyager sits at the stern with the rudder in his hand?

The sword of creative conflict symbolizes not simply an idea (however lovely or revolutionary); it is a glorious idea whose cutting edge is a courageous deed.

Jesus entertained no idea of peace by which his followers could avoid taking sides. He himself was not crucified because he went around blessing little children or speaking comforting words to people who had found life hard and crushing. He was nailed to his cross because he took sides; because he uncovered the hypocrisy of a gang of respectable religious leaders who were exploiting the worshipping throngs that came up to Zion.

We must distinguish clearly between the motives that impel men to take sides on great issues. Some individuals seem to be more *pugnacious* than *informed*, and they rush into any situation that promises a good fight. Some seem merely to seek the thrill of novelty that comes in departures from the conventional lines of conduct. This darkens rather than clarifies moral insight. Can you imagine Jesus *breezing* into a group with the announcement, "Oh boy, I ate with some publicans to-day! What will the Pharisees do when they hear that?" Or can you think of him boasting, "Didn't I give those hypocritical Pharisees a knockout to-day in that talk of mine?" No, you cannot; for neither the drive of a pugnacious spirit nor the thirst for novelty led Jesus to join the issue with his contemporaries.

Such reprehensible attitudes are to be distinguished sharply from genuine moral discernment which leads men to take up the sword of creative strife. He who wields it successfully must wear not only the helmet of a sober confidence but also the breastplate of a chastened humility.

“PEACE IS AN ADVENTURE”

Perhaps we are to blame for the glorification of war because we have had too anemic a conception of peace. Peace is not to be identified with inactivity. That has been the tragedy of the word; we have defined it negatively as cessation from hostilities. Put the challenge of adventure into peace, and strong men and women may be enlisted for its achievement.

Peace is not inertia. Men used to speak of matter as being *at rest*. But Professor Thomson now writes of “the entire falseness of the idea of inert matter. Everything is in a bustle, but in most cases a very orderly bustle. To take the simplest case, the electron of the hydrogen atom revolves in its tiny orbit round the proton at the rate of about fourteen hundred miles in a second; in a millionth of a second, it goes round its orbit about seven thousand million times.” That which appears to be at rest is simply the equilibrium of almost infinite energy—motion—activity. The peaceful life is not one of inactivity, but one in which an equilibrium has been established between

all the powerful forces at work in it. Something like this must have been in the mind of Jesus when he said: "Peace I leave with you ; my peace I give unto you." Not the peace of the cloister ! Not the peace of the man who has withdrawn from the world ! But the peace of one who had greatly lived.

In a world of feverish unrest where strong men tremble and only shallow optimists regard the future with calmness who shall point us the way of peace ? Is it not the Prince of Peace who says to us : "I am the real and living way ?"

CHAPTER IV

THE WAY OF POWER

"You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you."
—Acts 1. 8

IV

THE WAY OF POWER

"The Christian religion," writes Francis G. Peabody, "like the Christian character, is not a detached, isolated, self-sufficient possession, but a *form of power*, an application of strength to weakness." This estimate of the religion of Jesus has been held from the beginning. Paul was not at all embarrassed in preaching the gospel even in Rome, for he was conscious of handling power—"God's saving power for everyone who has faith."

FROM PROBLEMS TO POWER

Can anything be more important for our present situation than to find the *way of power*? Many are now not so deeply concerned lest men reject our Gospel, as they are perturbed lest men accept a Gospel that is less than "God's saving power for everyone who has faith."

If we never get beyond the stage of revolving our problems, we are engaged in a futile performance. The time must come when we pass from the discussion

of problems to the discovery of power. The Gospel is not a parlour panacea for clever discourses, but an empowered life for making all things new.

Jesus' way of power spans the chasm that separated the moral imperative and the moral achievement. Here was the "ought"—the moral imperative—and yonder across a great gulf was the "is"—the moral achievement. In him the moral imperative *became* the moral achievement; and his moral achievement *becomes* our moral imperative. Before his day men saw only the "Stern Lawgiver," but by his way of power they came to see also "the Godhead's most benignant grace." This was the problem with which Paul wrestled. "I do not act," said he, "as I want to act; on the contrary, I do what I detest . . . miserable wretch that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? God will! Thanks be to him through Jesus Christ our Lord!" He was simply saying that Jesus' way of power alone helped him from goodness as the stern imperative to goodness as the glorious achievement.

EXPERIENCE AS POWER

Jesus gives us the distinct impression of power. It may be a difficult thing to define; but in that respect it is not different from electricity. After a life-time of experimentation with electricity Lord Kelvin declared that he knew nothing about its essential nature, although he could describe its manifestations and

utilize its energy for accomplishing many wonderful things. In the life of Jesus we are able to discern certain aspects and manifestations of power without feeling that we can give an adequate definition of its essential nature.

We read that "When Jesus finished his speech, the crowds were astounded at his teaching; for he taught them like an authority, not like their own scribes." The scribes were venders of traditional religion, passing on the formulas of previous generations; Jesus possessed the authority which first-hand experience alone confers, not an ecclesiastically transmitted or superficially imposed authority. He did not arbitrarily lay down rules for his followers. He discovered the principles of life through his own experience and announced them. He lived in perfect harmony with them and thus established their validity. The way of Jesus therefore derives its power from experience. This accounts for the vibrant reality of his message which led men to wonder and to declare that "no man ever spoke as he does."

Some of the lack of power in contemporary religion may be due to the same thing that handicapped the scribes in their teaching of religion. This generation has an ear keen to detect any note of unreality in religion. It will not stop long to listen to that which is rumoured to be true, but will wait eagerly upon the message empowered by first-hand contact with reality. Surely Paul, if alive to-day, would rather speak five

words in the language of contemporary experience than ten thousand in the language of a dead past. Theological controversies rarely centre about the realities of experience but almost invariably about the way in which some former generation gave *verbal* expression to its experience. The poet was right in comparing us with the six blind men of Indostan who went to see the elephant:

“So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what the others mean,
And prate about an elephant
Not one of them has seen!”

When religion contents itself with the interpretation of past experiences alone, it is no more than a system of dogmas. Those dogmas are of antiquarian interest only, which cannot be perpetually revitalized by birth into the world of contemporary experience.

What happened on Easter morning cannot be a matter of any great importance, if we are finally unable to break the seal of Cæsar and roll away the stone which blocks the entry of Christ into the world of modern industry. What vital significance can attach to the experience of Peter and Thomas in those days which followed immediately upon the Crucifixion, if we are ultimately powerless to break down

those imprisoning forces which keep the spirit of Christ out of the contacts of the nations?

Doctrines are important in a religion of power only as they can be shown to bear some vital relation to the enrichment of present-day experience.

SERVICE AS POWER

Jesus regarded service not as exhaustion but as a source of strength. To do the will of God was to partake of power-replenishing food. When he had finished the conversation with the woman of Samaria his "disciples pressed him, saying, 'Rabbi, eat something.' But he said to them, 'I have food, of which you know nothing.' So the disciples asked each other, 'Can anyone have brought him something to eat?' Jesus said, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work.' "

Unless there are maladjustments in a life, service will never result in exhaustion but always in a renewal of power. Is it not suggestive to think that Jesus, "exhausted by the journey," was renewed in spirit and body by the simple service of helping a poor woman find "the spring of water welling up to eternal life." Some would have said in reply to the invitation to eat, "Yes, I will; the journey was hard enough, but I am completely worn out by that poor woman." Not so Jesus!

Spiritual economy necessitates a direct relation between power and service. If no service, why power?

FAITH AS POWER

Perplexed by their lack of power, "the disciples came to Jesus in private and said, 'Why could we not cast it out?' He said to them, 'Because you have so little faith. I tell you truly, if you had faith the size of a grain of mustardseed, you could say to this hill, 'Move from here to there,' and remove it would; nothing would be impossible for you.' " Thus forcefully did Jesus assert the direct relation between faith and power.

Faith is the power that has launched every life-bringing movement in the world's history. "You are the salt of the earth. . . . You are the light of the world," said Jesus in one of the most daring statements of faith that men have ever heard. But such faith was the power that started the religion of Jesus on its world mission. "Yet it was a Nazarene carpenter speaking to a group of Galilean peasants and fishermen. Under the circumstances, and at the time, it was an utterance of the most daring faith—faith in himself, faith in them, faith in what he was putting into them, faith in faith. Jesus failed and was crucified, first his body by his enemies, and then his spirit by the men who bore his name. But that failure was so amazing a success that to-day it takes

an effort on our part to realize that it required any faith on his part to inaugurate the Kingdom of God and to send out his apostolate.”¹

We have been considering faith; it may not be amiss, before going further, to seek for a vital definition of this very familiar word. According to a recent writer, faith “is not blindness and credulity; it is vision plus daring.”² “*Vision plus daring!*” Insight into some fundamental truth, and heroic action based upon that insight! A scientific writer calls faith “that spirit of trusting adventure, often with little to justify it, that has been the mainspring of all progress, mental and material.” Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews in the light of these definitions! “It was by faith that Moses refused, when he had grown up, to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.” Moses had vision plus daring.

The record of faith begun in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews is not yet complete. Every generation has added something to that record.

“Columbus found a world, and had no chart,
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies;
To trust the soul’s invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art.”

By faith William Penn lived among the Indians armed only with a sense of justice and trust in his fellowmen of the wilds. By faith Mahatma Gandhi,

¹Rauschenbusch: *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 415.

²Fosdick: *Harper’s Magazine*, December, 1925.

frail little Hindu, set soul-force against the might of the world's greatest empire, and demonstrated the power of a new technic in human struggle. By faith thousands of people in all lands have turned their backs upon war, believing in the super-power of goodwill and coöperation. "Therefore," as the author of Hebrews concludes, "with all this host of witnesses encircling us, we must strip off every handicap, strip off sin with its clinging folds, to run our appointed course steadily, our eyes fixed upon Jesus as the pioneer and perfection of faith." Jesus shows the way of power because he was the pioneer and perfection of "vision plus daring."

PRAYER AS POWER

Jesus developed the habit of prayer, without becoming habituated to a religious routine. He attained to the confidence of communion with God, without falling into the careless presumption of ease in securing the divine audience. He found the secret of praying naturally, without ever a hint of the familiarity so jauntily assumed in the vulgar monologues which are mistaken for prayer. He stripped prayer of the sham with which a pious conceit was wont to invest it, leaving the reality underneath the sham clothed with the beauty of sincerity.

It is impossible to separate the ideas of power and prayer in the life of Jesus. It may be difficult to con-

struct a *philosophy* of prayer from the experience of Jesus, but it is more difficult to ignore the *power* of prayer in his life.

"That He was a child of a praying home and a praying nation requires no proof. . . . He lives so much in the Psalter that He cries to His God in the words of the Psalms when the anguish of death chokes His own words. . . . But Jesus did not pray out of inherited piety alone; He spoke with His God not only in the old true forms which are passed on from generation to generation by mothers, but also in a self-sustaining prayer-life, to which the Gospels make frequent reference."³

"Then in the early morning, long before daylight, he got up and went away out to a lonely spot." ". . . after saying goodbye to them he went up the hill to pray." ". . . he took Peter, John, and James, and went up the hillside to pray." Our record emphasizes *that* Jesus prayed rather than the content of his prayers. It gives us no literary prayers for liturgical purposes, but indicates the place and power of prayer in his work.

Definitions of prayer are necessarily inadequate because it is one of the most intimate spiritual experiences in the universe. But though we may not know all about prayer, some things seem clear. It is "the soul's sincere desire." It is communion with the Father. It is an acceptance of responsibility from

³Deissmann: *The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul*, p. 46f.

God and not a shifting of responsibility to God. Prayer is not persuading a reluctant god, but fellowship with a working God in making a new earth. It is not begging God to do something contrary to his will, but the full and conscious dedication of oneself to a partnership with God in realizing his will for ourselves and the world.

The only sense in which it is proper to seek God's blessing upon our human endeavours is by bringing their motives and methods into fuller harmony with the divine purpose. We neither inform God concerning our projects, nor arouse his interest in our enterprises by making them the subjects of our prayers; we hold them under the searching scrutiny of the highest we know, eager to correct whatever aberrations appear, and intent upon sharing the eternal patience and courage in striving to fulfill whatever stands the test of the supreme good.

Seeking for the way of power we must say, as did his disciples of old, "Lord, teach us to pray."

THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE AND POWER

"You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you," was the assurance Jesus gave his followers who were to face tremendous tasks. That he did not think of the power of the Spirit as an emotional glow for their own satisfaction but as preparation for witnessing is clear from the words which

followed: "And you will be my witnesses at Jerusalem, throughout all Judæa and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

But Jesus was not talking about an experience for his disciples to which he himself was a stranger; again, he *had shown* the way of power. When he stood up to speak in the synagogue at Nazareth, he said "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." In his case too the Spirit was for witnessing. Continuing in the words of Isaiah, he declared—

"for he has consecrated me to preach the gospel to the poor;
he has sent me to proclaim release for captives,
and recovery of sight for the blind;
to set free the oppressed; to proclaim the Lord's
year of favour."

When he announced that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and that the scripture had been fulfilled that day in their hearing, no one objected; rather, as the record says, "All spoke well of him and marvelled at the gracious words that came from his lips." But, as soon as he went on to declare the eligibility of other races for the Kingdom and its blessings, there was a change. "When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage; they rose up, put him out of the town, and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, in order to hurl him down." They could welcome a prophet from their own village as long as he spoke gracious words,

but when he witnessed to a truth that touched their deep-seated prejudices, he was not to be tolerated. The Spirit of the Lord was upon him to strengthen him in declaring the truth, not to win for him the compliments of his fellow-villagers.

PSEUDO-POWER AND THE WAY OF POWER

Thus through experience, service, faith, prayer and the Spirit-filled life Jesus walked the way of power. Early in his ministry he had considered other ways of power. He knew that through economic power he might wield great influence over men, but he rejected an exclusively economic interpretation of history. "Man is not to live on bread alone, but on every word that issues from the mouth of God." He knew that sensationalism was a form of power that could be employed in winning the masses and he considered its desirability, but again he put aside the thought of power calculated to give quick and easy triumph to his cause. Imperial might such as that of Alexander and the Cæsars was known to him, and the people fully expected that their Messiah would possess it. "The realms of the world and their grandeur" might be his if he put himself at the head of a band of fiery zealots. Alexander had come from a little country and had conquered with amazing success. The Maccabees had demonstrated the military power of his own people. But Jesus definitely rejected this form

of power. He chose to use the silent forces of the spirit for accomplishing his aim. Has he vindicated his choice?

Since the day that the Cross was placed above the Roman Eagle and Christianity was converted to Constantine, the followers of Jesus have repudiated his way of power by putting their trust in pseudo-power. They have striven for financial power as though it alone opened the door to abundant living. Occasionally they have made mockery of life's deep seriousness by coveting social power with its tinsel and triviality. They have manœuvred for political power, little recking that they were but momentarily pedestaled on capricious insecurity. They have built up military power, discarding the Galilean in favour of the Roman pattern of success. They have even schemed for ecclesiastical power in the name of Christ himself. For all of it there is one end—disappointment!

But some day, in its quest for that final type of power, the world will wend its way to Bethlehem and Nazareth, to Bethany and Calvary. Until then, the spirit of Christ in the midst of us cries, "O world, world! How often I would fain have gathered your children as a fowl gathers her brood under her wings. But you would not have it!" In answer to the demand for a dynamic, Jesus shows the "real and living way."

CHAPTER V

THE WAY OF LOVE

*"This is my command: you are to love one another
as I have loved you."*

—John 15:12

THE WAY OF LOVE

Words, like people, sometimes suffer in reputation by reason of their associations. Such has been the misfortune of the word "love." "Perhaps," says Richard Roberts, "we need a Society for the Rehabilitation of Prostituted Words; and the first word that should be taken in hand is *love*."

Love may kindle the emotions and attach itself to the noblest of sentiments, but love is neither emotionalism nor sentimentality. These, we have discovered, are not always ethically dependable; *love is*.

Love did not make of Jesus a chameleon in character. It was not inconsistent with what Professor Dickey calls his "moral effrontery." "This 'moral effrontery' of Jesus is a novel feature in His portrait. It does not harmonize exactly with the conventional likeness of Him current either in art or literature. Is it possible that he also has been misunderstood? That His personality has been softened, His attitudes mollified, His programme diluted, until the milk and water draught that remains is no longer piquant enough to tempt the world to taste it, much

less potent enough to cure its conspicuous ailments if accepted. Surely His sweetness and amiability have been overdone, His love and kindness sometimes debased into a flabby sort of sentimentality. If He was so innocuous and amiable, why were so many of His contemporaries madly incensed against Him? Inoffensive characters seldom provoke people to move heaven and earth to put them to death, nor do they leave the mark behind them that we trace in the world's history from Christ's day down to this." ¹

In considering Jesus' way of love we must also remember the limitation of words. Goethe said that "the highest cannot be spoken; it can only be acted." And Coventry Patmore writes with true recognition of the inadequacy of words that

"In Divinity and Love
What's best worth saying can't be said."

THE STRENGTH OF LOVE

Jesus reveals the strength of love. As he understood it and lived it, love was a continued giving of oneself to others and for others but how weak such a statement sounds when one looks upon the portrait of this "tremendous lover." Love on its highest plane is for strong souls, not for the weak and vacillating. Have we not sometimes been guilty of believing that

¹Dickey: *The Constructive Revolution of Jesus*, p. 9f.

those who can, use their fists ; while those who cannot, try love? Men will never try the way of love as long as we give standing to such a proposition.

It was a profound discovery that love alone has strength sufficient to break the vicious circle of hate and retaliation. Lao-tze also discovered this principle and said: "Recompense injury with kindness." Six centuries before Christ he saw the futility of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and wrote: "To those who are good to me, I am good. And to those who are not good to me, I am also good. And thus all get to be good." Hate is futile and acts with terrible disintegrating effect upon the soul that indulges it. Love is strong!

That Jesus was not thinking of love as an attribute of anemic characters is evident in his words which reveal the virility of love: "To lay life down for his friends, man has no greater love than that."

THE COURTESY OF LOVE

We see in Jesus the courtesy of love. Moffatt translates one sentence from the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians with the words, "love . . . is never rude." Love has respect for personality. "God is so courteous," said St. Francis of Assisi, "that he will never invade the privacy of the human soul." Jesus, the Incarnate Love of God, is like that. "Lo, I stand at the door and knock ; if anyone hears my

voice and opens the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me."

One of the best emphases of this generation is belief in this *courtesy* of all the finer values of life. We have learned that the door of the human spirit must be opened from the inside or it will never be opened to beauty, knowledge, truth, love and God. Are you still trying to use battering ram methods? God does not! Love does not! Knowledge does not in spite of the old idea that reading, writing and arithmetic could be taught to the tune of the hickory stick. Attempts to force the door are not only unsuccessful, but destructive of personality. Love knows this.

"O Jesus, thou art knocking,
And lo, that hand is scarred;
And thorns thy brow encircle;
And tears thy face have marred.
O love that passeth knowledge
So patiently to wait.
O sin that hath no equal
So fast to bar the gate."

THE INCLUSIVENESS OF LOVE

Jesus indicated the inclusiveness of love. His command was clear: "You must love . . . your neighbour as yourself." A jurist once asked him for a definition of this obligation, hoping apparently that

his neighbours might turn out to be few in number and difficult to identify. But Jesus' reply was the Parable of All-Inclusive Neighbourliness, familiarly known as the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The law of love has neither exception nor limit. Its greatest opportunity lies where need is most pressing.

The missionary enterprise is the Church's response to the demands of Inclusive Love. Sharing our best with others on the basis of mutuality is the impelling motive of the modern Christian enterprise in other lands.

But there is a lurking danger that Love may try to reach out across the seas while ignoring its opportunities that lie nearer at hand. However diligently it may strive to work abroad, love is not inclusive that does not labour with equal zest at home. We are beginning to see very clearly that effectiveness of love abroad depends upon inclusiveness of love at home. A recent convention of Religious Education that advertised itself as International set up racial barriers which resulted in the absence of a large group from the convention, and then proceeded to send "fraternal" greetings to Asia and Africa!

It cannot be doubted that Jesus intentionally introduced the inter-racial aspect into his Parable of All-Inclusive Neighbourliness! He strikingly set forth that phase of neighbourliness by using the despised Samaritan as the central figure in his story.

THE RISKS OF LOVE

Jesus emphasized the risks of love. To start out to walk the way of love as Jesus walked it is to set one's feet upon a road whereon may stand a cross.

Love and the risk of danger are inseparable. Several years ago a young man went out from an American college to do educational work in the Dutch East Indies. His first appointment was to the little island of Banka where he was far removed from any of his fellow-countrymen. Later he was sent to an inland city in the island of Java, where he taught a small group of Chinese boys and girls of the elementary grades. He built no church and baptized no converts, but shared life in its fulness with his young friends. A part of each day was given to class instruction and much of the remainder of the day to contacts outside the school room—trips to the mountains, picnics on the river bank and comradeship. His contract expired at the end of three years, but as there was no one to succeed him he gladly consented to remain for another half year at his post.

Again and yet again he extended the period of his service until four and a half years had been given to the work instead of the three years called for by his contract. He was urged to take his furlough, and brought his baggage to the annual conference expecting to sail for America, where his parents and friends were eagerly awaiting his return. But, finding

that his work would be left with no one to carry it on, he asked for the privilege of returning to the little town where he had invested so much of his life already.

Three months passed and again he made arrangements to sail for America. With his small group of students he went to the river for an outing. A Chinese lad of ten years was playing on a raft and fell into the river. Not being able to swim, he called for help as he went down. The young American teacher, who was a good athlete, ran down the bank, plunged into the stream and swam out to the drowning boy. In the very difficult work of rescue the boy seemed to get his feet around the teacher's neck and both went down. . . . The bodies were recovered about two days later.

It was suggested that teacher and pupil should be buried in a double grave and that it should be marked with a beautiful stone. In their search for an epitaph they found some words from a book that the teacher often used and read to his pupils. They read: "Tiada Kasih yang lebih besar dari pada ini, yaitu seorang menyerahkan hidopnya ganti sobatnya," which in the teacher's tongue meant: "To lay life down for his friends, man has no greater love than that." He had been doing it all along in less dramatic ways, but when the moment came love did not halt at the risk always inherent in it.

I found in the Bible of this American teacher,

Leroy Akerson, who had so effectively put the meaning of Christianity into terms of life, a duplicate of his life-service pledge which he had signed at college several years before. It read: "I, Leroy L. Akerson, hereby dedicate myself a living sacrifice for *whatever, whenever, wherever* pleases Him."

To love is to risk. To love greatly is to risk greatly. To love infinitely is to risk infinitely. To love is to throw down the shield and bare one's heart for the possible thrust of the knife.

What one feels in the presence of physical tragedy must be slight in comparison with God's thought in the presence of the moral tragedy of his children. We are so little sensitive to moral tragedy because we are so little like God. Love, the self-giving of the Divine, is fundamental in the Christian thought of creation. To make a race of beings endowed with a measure of freedom, that they might become like God, was a plan of love, but from the beginning it was fraught with the risk of moral tragedy and divine suffering. A God who *suffers* because of the moral disorder within his universe is the revelation of the Cross. "The cross," writes Professor G. A. Johnston Ross, "is a projection upon the plane of time of an eternal state of things in the heart of God."

It is desperate business to walk the way of love in a world where bigotry, narrowness, and selfishness are found. Conflict will come. The Day of the Crucifixion marked the supreme struggle with these forces.

Sin unrelenting met Love unbounded; took it in its teeth, and shook the life out of it. At the end of that day there was a broken, bleeding form!

THE REDEMPTION OF LOVE

But that was not all! The risks of love *never* issue in futility. As the poet has declared:

“He was a gambler, too, my Christ;
He took his life and threw it for a world redeemed,
But ere the westering sun went down,
Crowning that day with its crimson crown,
He knew that he had won.”

So he had! Love that could bear with dignity and forgiveness the cruelest blows of its torturers could not be defeated.

Love of this kind redeems the most unlovely objects that it touches. When the Cross was becoming a fact in human experience, that day on the streets of Jerusalem, and outside the gate, it would have been sheer madness to sing about it. Nobody could have suggested that a cross be placed upon the spire of a house where God was worshipped. It was a brutal, ugly fact that did not remotely suggest a theme for song, or a symbol of religion's highest reach. But Suffering Love was bearing that cross and when it finally laid it down, its transforming power had made it into a thing of imperishable glory, set

it as the symbol of the world's final type of power,
and enabled us to sing,

“In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o’er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.”

Christians have always instinctively associated redemption and the Cross, and the instinct has been a sound one. But the detailed interpretations have often been crudely materialistic and grossly legalistic, endangering the very idea of God which Jesus held. The relationship between redemption and the Cross must be ethical on all sides, and not magical. We have sung “Jesus paid it all” in flat contradiction to Jesus’ own words that there is a price for every man to pay in Christian redemption. We have set the doctrine of the Cross in the atmosphere and terminology of a court room, in direct contradiction to the whole tenor of Jesus’ life. Our idea of God has fallen far below the level of the great Hebrew prophets who taught that God was not to be appeased by a sacrificial victim. We have talked about God substituting the innocent for the guilty in punishment and thus put him on a lower moral plane than moderately good men who would do no such thing.

The Cross does two things for us: it reveals sin and it reveals God. Repentance and trust are the essentials to beginning the new life of the Kingdom.

But repentance must rest upon an adequate comprehension of sin. The Cross of Jesus shows sin at its blackest, and is therefore the supreme warning of history against sin. He who comprehends this side of the revelation of the Cross cries: "If sin is like that, I turn from it." But trust in a God who is sacrificial Love is also necessary for the new life of the Kingdom. Those who see in Jesus the life of God expressed in human terms come to realize through the Cross something of the lengths to which a Father God will go to win his children. He who comprehends this side of the revelation of the Cross cries: "If God is like that, I turn to him."

So the risks of love through the ages have never issued in futility but in redemption. Never a sacrifice for love's sake but somewhere a better life! That was why Jesus wanted his followers to put the principle of sacrificial love at the center of their lives.

FACTS AND THE WAY OF LOVE

When one talks about the Way of Love as an adequate solution for some of our most pressing problems, some earnest person is ready to counsel that we *face the facts*. "I admire your idealism," he says, "but we live in a world of stern facts and must face them." Even so, but Christianity means that love is one of the ultimate facts of the universe. Some believe that only upon the plane of material facts

do we deal with reality. Spiritual facts, like love, are good enough to talk about in church, but too unreal to carry into a world where hatred, jealousy and selfishness rule. Here is the great skepticism of this age. We are right now in danger of absorbing the so-called Prussian philosophy which we so greatly abhorred a decade ago. It is preached from a thousand platforms and labeled "patriotism."

But Jesus faced the facts of this life if any man has ever faced them. Glover has appropriately called him "the Son of Fact." When he said, "love your enemies," he was not talking about an ideal world of righteousness, but about a world in which there were enemies to be hated or loved. Jesus faced the facts of enmity, greed, violence and brutality, and he also faced the greater fact of love. He alone has faced *all* the facts who has taken cognizance of love.

We have now reached the point in the Christian enterprise throughout the world where we must choose between the doctrine of the gunboat and the Gospel of the Cross. We cannot go on mixing them. We cannot keep in separate water-tight compartments our theory of Christian missions and our State Department policies. Any attempt to do so will cut the nerve of our Christian enterprise, if indeed it is not already cut!

No one could fail to be thankful for the progress we have made during the past century in our treatment of the criminal. But recent disclosures of un-

speaking barbarity in prisons and prison camps indicate that we still have on our hands one of the most serious problems of society. Some seem to take it for granted that here is an exception to the law of love, but no such exception appears in the teaching of Jesus. He actually goes so far as to identify himself with those who are in prison, and is not particular to differentiate between the innocent and the guilty who may be confined in prison walls.

As long as the punitive, rather than the redemptive, motive controls in our treatment of offenders, just so long are we working below the Christian plane. As long as the State exploits the labour of convicts with small care for their welfare and complete rehabilitation in society, just so long is the State itself morally reprehensible. As long as our institutions for the unfortunate are political institutions, just so long will it be impossible to apply scientific, humanitarian, Christian principles to the problems of the offender against society.

In a world too largely ruled by hate and fear, who can restore our faith in the way of love? Is it not the one who alone earned the right to give us the new commandment, that "you are to love one another"? He who could ask forgiveness for his torturers, who in life and death revealed that God is love, says to us: "I am the real and living way."

CHAPTER VI

THE WAY OF LIFE

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."

—John 10:10.

VI

THE WAY OF LIFE

The Gospel of John puts special emphasis upon "life." We find the word life in this gospel almost three times as often as we find it in the other three gospels together. According to this evangelist, life is the supreme possession to be found in the way of Jesus.

"In him life lay, and this life was the Light for men."

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life."

"The water I shall give him will turn into a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

"I am the bread of life."

"The words I have uttered to you are spirit and life."

"I am myself resurrection and life."

"And this is eternal life, that they know thee, the only real God, and him whom thou hast sent, even Jesus Christ."

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."

MAKING LIFE AND RELIGION ONE

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full," said Jesus in explanation of his mission. But his work has not always been so simply and gloriously interpreted by his followers.

The gospel is not primarily a creed to be believed or a program to be adopted, but life to be shared. It can be expressed more perfectly in the beautiful rhythm of life than in the flawless syllogism of logic.

Life! Can you think of a word more adequate to convey the deepest meaning of Jesus' coming? Try the word civilization! "I have come that they may have civilization and have it to the full." Almost ridiculous, though we sometimes boast of the achievements of our civilization as though it were the highest end to be sought. Albert Schweitzer says that it is a virtue for a tribe or a nation "to know how much civilization it can stand without rotting."

"I have come that they may have religion and have it to the full." There, too, we feel that something has been lost from the full meaning of Jesus' mission. India has religion and has it to the full, but not life to the full!

Two earnest students were conversing about the deeper meaning of life when one said: "Life seems so much bigger than religion. When I think of religion I think of churches and preachers and ceremonies, but life is as big as all out of doors." Reli-

gion and life must be coextensive, and both will be the poorer until we make them so.

Jesus' way of life has no room for our false dualisms. He came to rend the veil that partitions life into the sacred and the secular. But subsequent centuries have spent much time in mending the veil. These dualisms invariably rob religion.

Any doctrine of Sunday observance that leads men to think of time as one-seventh religious and six-sevenths secular is robbing religion. If religion and life are to be one we must recognize the religious significance of all time. This does not mean that Sunday should be held less sacred, or that we should not have a special time and day for worship; it simply means that we must learn to relate every day to the interests of the kingdom of God in such a way as to recognize our stewardship of all time.

A similar danger inheres in a customary way of thinking about a special call to religious work, as though one life is more related to the divine plan than another. We divide men into two classes—those chosen by God for religious work, and those who choose their own life work. Few errors have been more deadly in their effects on life! Should a man engaged professionally in preaching the Gospel be more conscious that his life is being lived in harmony with the divine will than the man who sits at the throttle of a locomotive? Not if the world really needs locomotive engineers! Out of this false dual-

ism emerges a double standard of religious and ethical living. Religious significance must attach to all vocations, if religion and life are to be one. Principal Jacks states this with his usual forcefulness: "If 'truth, beauty, and goodness,' or whatever else be the names of the eternal values, are to be effectively at home in a working world, they must be lodged in its work. If that is false, little else can be true; if that is ugly, little else can be beautiful; if that is evil, little else can be good."¹ Labour's profoundest problem lies not in hours and wages (we have no desire to minimize the importance of these), but in this matter of investing all of worthwhile toil with permanent significance.

Carl Sandburg has put the idea into one of his Chicago Poems. He is describing a Jewish fish-crier down on Maxwell Street:

"His face is that of a man terribly glad to be selling fish, terribly glad that God made fish, and customers to whom he may call his wares from a pushcart."

Who has not heard the story of the finding of one of the lost sayings of Jesus? In 1897 Grenfell and Hunt found, in a rubbish heap near Oxyrynchus in Egypt, a papyrus fragment which had been written about 200 A. D. It contained this saying: "Jesus says: Raise the stone, and there you will find me;

¹Jacks: *The Challenge of Life*, p. 86.

cut the wood and there I am." It may be apocryphal, but it is in perfect harmony with the life and teachings of him who was both carpenter and Christ, who invested all worthwhile toil with the highest of dignities, who never intended that religion should occupy one of the corners of life.

Of course we must avoid the obviously false conclusion that all work is of equal value when judged by its consequences for human welfare and the advancement of the kingdom of God. Some men change the course of history and some do not; but it does not follow that because a man's name is forgotten by posterity he lived his life without religious significance or out of harmony with the divine will. The way to avoid dualistic conceptions of work is suggested by Paul: that "whether we eat or drink" or build houses or write books or preach sermons or hew wood or sell fish, "we should do all to the glory of God," that every individual should feel unmistakably that he is living his life where God would have him live it.

Under the cover of our false dualisms we hide unethical standards. This is the meaning of such excuses as that expressed in the words: "Business is business." We try to tell ourselves that there are areas of life where the highest ethical standards of religion are not applicable or at least not practical.

The trouble with an old idea of miracle was its

claim that God was active in the unusual or inexplicable, whereas something called "natural law" accounted for all ordinary happenings. This, too, was an unprofitable dualism that is passing, and we are learning to find God in all the processes of his universe. The old idea robbed religion by giving religious significance to only a very small part of the experience of the human race. Professor Conklin shows the religious value of the larger thought about God's activity: "If he is in all law, then he is in the world as much, yes, more than ever; and every blazing autumn hedge is really the burning bush out of whose midst the Omnipresent speaks, every clod is sacred ground, every day is a holy day, and we all live in the constant presence of Deity." The passing of this dualistic idea of miracle has not impoverished, rather it has enriched, religion.

We must work for the day when life and religion will be coterminus; but just now our word "religion" is too small to compass the meaning and result of Jesus' work. Jesus never intended to found a religion in our narrow sense of the word. As the founder of a religion he would be in the company of Zoroaster, Gautama, and Muhammad, but as the bringer of life and the fulness of life he stands alone.

Contrast Jesus' thought with that of Buddhism. Buddhism holds three propositions as fundamental truths:

"All the constituents of life are perishable."

"All the constituents of life are misery."

"All the constituents of life are empty."

Naturally its conclusion is that religion is a way of escape *from* life. Jesus' thought of religion makes it a way of *entering into* the fulness of life. Francis Thompson thought that Jesus came to cramp life, and wrote:

"For though I knew his love who followed,
Yet was I sore adread
Lest, having him, I must have nought beside."

But Thompson eventually discovered what comes to all who enter into the fellowship of the lifegiving Christ:

"All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home;
Rise, clasp my hand, and come."

THE DIMENSIONS OF LIFE

The cynic's definition of life was "one long conjugation of the verb *to eat*." The pessimist of the Old Testament saw life as a monotonous round of futility:

"Utterly vain, utterly vain,
everything is vain!
Man labours at his toil under the sun;
what does he gain?"

The generations come and go,
but there the earth is, there it shall remain.
The rising sun goes down, it hurries round
only to rise again. . . .
All things are weary,
weary beyond words:
The eye is never satisfied,
the ear has never enough."

The foolish man said to himself, "Soul, you have ample stores laid up for many a year." But Jesus said that "life is something more than food." Nor do we understand from the life of one who lived no more than thirty-three years that life is "longevity." The Fourth Gospel speaks often of "eternal life," but this must not be understood as mere continued existence. "Eternal life" is a quality of life that may and should be experienced this side of the grave. It is the life of *many dimensions*. To Jesus life meant *depth* of experience. He shows us how to avoid the sin of *shallowness*. It meant *height* of aspiration—even to perfection of character. He shows us how to avoid the sin of *low aims*. It meant *breadth*—an all-inclusive sympathy and appreciation. He shows us how to avoid the sin of *narrowness*. To him life meant *fulness*; he pressed into every waking hour all the goodness it would hold. He shows us how to avoid the sin of *emptiness*.

There is nothing more appropriate in human life than the dividing of all time into two divisions, B. C.

and A. D. Every daily newspaper bears witness to the fact that time found its center in the life of Jesus.

What could be more tragically incongruous in a large-scale world than a life of small dimensions? Recent writers have much to say about "below-capacity living." We must face the challenge of that description. Below-capacity living! There was never such an opportunity for living on a large scale and up to capacity as there is in the world to-day.

Three and four centuries ago men were living in the wonderful era of geographical expansion. They must have thought their age the greatest of all; and what a thrill to have stood

"With stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

Followed quickly the eras of commercial, industrial, and inventive genius which gave ample scope for the spirit of discovery. Now we live in a world where man has conquered nearly everything but himself. He has mapped every continent but that of spiritual achievement. The next expansion must come along that line, which means to find the way of life where all men may live it to the full. The challenge leads many to think that our civilization faces its final survival test.

For every life God has a pattern. It has been

drawn with large dimensions. Like the *real* Peer Gynt who existed in Solveig's "faith, hope and love," so in his faith, hope and love God has intended that every life shall be lived to the full.

"O love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee,
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, *fuller* be."

LIFE AND THE LAW WITHIN

Man does not truly live until he becomes morally autonomous. The Hebrew sage understood that and wrote: "He who controls himself is better than a conqueror." And again it was said:

"A man with no control over himself
is like a town with broken walls."

External regulation alone is futile, for man's final seat of authority lies within. The only decrees that effectively control life arise there. Jeremiah discovered this fundamental principle of life and saw the necessity for a new day and a new covenant:

"I will put my law within them,
and write it on their hearts."

For Jesus, above all others perhaps, morality was first of all an inner compulsion. He went much deeper than the old commandment against taking life, and

commanded reconciliation with any brother that might have a grievance against one. His treatment of impurity was similar; he went deeper than overt acts and spoke of the "unchastity of the heart." It was against the legalism of externalities that Jesus protested so vigorously, insisting that men "first clean the inside of the cup."

"Blind Pharisees! first clean the inside of the cup,
so that the outside may be clean as well.

Woe to you, you irreligious scribes and Pharisees!
you are like tombs white-washed;
they look comely on the outside,
but inside they are full of dead men's bones
and all manner of impurity.

So to men you seem just,
but inside you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity!"

PURPOSEFUL LIVING

Life is saved from the fatal defect of superficiality and aimlessness by having at its centre a single dynamic purpose. This is purposeful living. Plutarch wrote of Demosthenes that, "He chose rather to forsake his life than his purpose." Jesus too set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem, choosing rather to forsake his life than his purpose. Many lives to-day are rich in contacts that Plato and Paul might well have coveted, but they are going nowhere in particular! There is no "set of the face." The purpose-

less life, as surely as the rudderless vessel, will eventually find itself a derelict in the backwash of the tide.

"No one can serve two masters," said Jesus. Fulness of life is impossible when one is torn within by cross-purposes.

TESTING BY THE WAY OF LIFE

Studdert-Kennedy says: "I am not the least bit afraid of going to hell, but I am horribly afraid that a day will come when Someone will look me in the eye and say, '*Well, and what did you make of it?*'" That is the question: what are we making of life?

Arnold wrote of Sophocles that "he saw life steadily and saw it whole." We are to see life "not with the slant of the scientist or the business man or the clubman or the artist or poet or preacher or the university professor, nor with any slant at all; but to see it as it would be seen by 'the spectator of all time and all existence.' " May not life be suffering from a slant-complex in our thinking about it and from below-capacity standards in our living of it?

It is impossible to think upon the fulness of life without bringing to mind tragic pictures that will not fade from the memory. It is because of the emptiness of so much of the world's life to-day that Jesus still meets the world's deepest need.

In the Orient one sees hundreds of opium addicts

scantily clothed, and with skeleton-like forms gruesome to behold. Think of life emptied in that fashion! What a terrible indictment of Western greed that has fastened the opium curse upon many Oriental peoples. The most appropriate commentary upon four centuries of relationships between Oriental peoples and so-called Christian peoples of the West would be: "We have come that we may exploit life and exploit it to the full."

In any city of the Orient or the West there is enough emptiness of life to break the heart of a Christ. It is not all found in tenement sections either; it is found also upon the avenues of aristocracy.

Nor is emptiness of life confined to the underprivileged of congested city districts and the luxury-ridden of society, it is found in rural areas.

The Church must take up the words of the Fourth Gospel for its own: "We have come that they may have life and have it to the full." To that stupendous task of world proportions only a united Church is equal, and not only a united Church but a Church that is essentially Christlike, having in itself the fulness of life.

In a world where life is cramped, and even death stalks in living forms, to whom shall we go for the word of life? Must we not make for ourselves the discovery of Peter: "Lord, who are we to go to? You have got words of eternal life." The Lord of Life still says to us: "I am the real and living way."

CHAPTER VII

THE WAY OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

"Blessed are the pure in heart! they will see God."

—Matthew 5:8.

VII

THE WAY OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

The ancient cry of Job is uttered by many to-day: "Oh that I knew where to find him." The quest for God is the supreme quest of the human heart.

Many will agree with a recent writer that hosts of men and women are eagerly waiting for someone to speak the word *God* with the authoritative note of reality. And yet our age is probably as God-conscious as any that has ever gone before. *Theoretical atheism* may have more adherents to-day than ever, but purely *theoretical theism* was never a vital factor in the life of the world, which goes on with little or no reference to the numbers who hold these positions. Unless theism makes a difference for life it merits no consideration; and we waste our time in deploring the passing of any idea of God or religion which does not function for human betterment.

We must have a well-reasoned theism, but we must have more. We must find the way of fellowship with God. Jesus' way of life is an answer to this greater need.

It is one thing to be convinced of God; it is an-

other thing to be aware of God. Intellectual conviction about God may be reached by processes of philosophy; but "religion means a world aware of God and capable of conscious coöperation with Him." Jesus' interest in God was not speculative; it was religious.

The jubilant note with which Jesus began his public work is heard in his announcement of the "good tidings of God." "Jesus went to Galilee preaching the gospel of God; he said, 'The time has now come, God's reign is near: repent and believe in the gospel.' " This "joyous idea of God" could arise only from a sense of fellowship with God.

Let us study the way of fellowship with God with four thoughts in mind, not that we have four separate approaches to God, any one of which might be used to the neglect of the others, but that we may omit nothing of importance in the quest for God.

THE WAY OF ETHICAL LIKEMINDEDNESS

"Blessed are the pure in heart! they will see God." With these words Jesus clearly indicated the way of ethical likemindedness as the way to fellowship with God. "The vision of God," writes Professor Glover, "depends on likeness to God—it is love and a glowing purity that give that faculty, rather than any power of intellect apart from them."

The holiness of God may be held as an intellectual

proposition, but until the idea is projected into daily *living* it has no bearing upon one's fellowship with God. Thinking and doing must be closely related, not only in the learning process, but also in the quest for God.

Ethical likeness, rather than blood ties, is the basis for the most intimate fellowship, according to Jesus. When those who were related to Jesus by blood came seeking him, he declared to those who were sitting round him: "Whosoever does the will of God, that is my brother and sister and mother." Jesus had regard for the tender relationship of mother and son, but he clearly taught that there is a higher relationship in the Family of God. "Doing the will of God" was his own highest motive, and whoever shares it, enters with him into the fellowship of God. All spiritual fellowship is dependent upon ethical likemindedness, no less between God and men than between men and men.

"God is Spirit," said Jesus to the Samaritan woman. Only as one lives upon a plane of spirit values may one expect fellowship with a God who is Spirit. Bound and ruled by material values one dulls the sense of God. Perhaps no word in our religious vocabulary is more misunderstood than "spirituality." It has been taken to mean *detachment, self-mortification, an other-worldly gaze, a glib acquaintance with religious terminology, a vague sentimentalism about Jesus*, and other similar things. It is one of the finest

words in our language and needs to be redeemed from such associations. It means the persistent pursuit of the good, the beautiful, and the true; or in the language of Jesus, seeking "God's Realm and his goodness." Spirituality in this sense is God-like and makes for fellowship with him.

Jesus spoke of God as "the Spirit of truth." "However, when the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you into all truth." Few statements of the Gospels are so little believed as this. Not many have looked for new insights into truth as the ages have passed. Yet all truth is God's truth; and he who fears truth doubts God. Dr. Tittle has well said that "the real skeptic is the man who has so little faith in his own position that he is afraid to have it critically examined; who has so little confidence in truth that he fears to have more of it discovered; who is tormented by the thought that if he knew more he might believe less." A daring abandon to truth will quicken the sense of God. "To think God's thoughts after him" in the great universe of which we are citizens is a part of vital fellowship with him. All things but truth must eventually fail, no matter how loudly we shout or how vigorously we persecute in their behalf.

"God is love." These exact words do not come to us from the lips of Jesus himself but they truly represent all that he was and did. In a language more effective than mere words he taught that God was

love—*untiring* love, *unrestricted* love, *courteous* love, *sacrificial* love, *redemptive* love. At the conclusion of a discussion of the law of love Jesus made the staggering statement: "You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Here he definitely asserted the necessity for ethical likemindedness between God and those who walk the way of fellowship with him. Hatred bars fast the door and shuts out not only its human object, but God as well.

The most distinctive idea of God which Jesus presented was that God is Father. It was not wholly original with him. Here and there the idea appears, though but momentarily, in the history of other religions before Christ. But with him that which was momentary became permanent; that which was incidental became normative; that which was marginal became central. If, as Jesus taught, God is Father of all men, irrespective of race or nationality, then our relationships with all races and nations must express the idea of brotherhood. The international mind and the interracial heart are ethical prerequisites for fellowship with God.

THE WAY OF FELLOWSHIP IN A COMMON TASK

Fellowship cannot end with congeniality or mutual attraction; its very continuance is precarious on such a basis. It achieves permanency and strength by con-

scious coöperation in a worthy undertaking. Fellowship's fulfillment is reached in a common dedication to the highest ends of living.

Jesus announced that the highest end to be sought is "God's Realm and his goodness." It is this for which God himself is striving. To live for this end is to become a partner with God in his highest creative activity. If the highest end for which one lives is anything less than "God's Realm and his goodness," the highest fellowship with the divine is impossible.

The ruling passion of many a life is personal pleasure. Others live apparently for the purpose of accumulating material wealth. Some are lured on by the lust for power over their fellow men; while others, less self-centred, strive for the supremacy of their particular group—ecclesiastical, racial, national, or social—over all other similar groups. All such motives of living fall far short of Jesus' devotion to the idea of "God's Realm and his goodness"; and each in its own degree dulls the sense of God.

Some Christians have waited for a better world-to-come instead of working with God for a better world here, and have thus missed that which was highest in religion. They have thought more about the heavenly city with its golden streets than of making the great modern centres of population righteous and beautiful cities of to-day. They are sure of the God of the "far away" and the "long ago" but not so conscious of the God who invites them into the

great partnership of building a Christian social order.
Who enters this fellowship with the divine sees

“ . . . Christ walking on the water,
Not of Gennesaret, but Thames ! ”

We are not thinking in any restricted sense of the ways in which men may be co-labourers with God. All that makes for that better and happier order, however indirect its contribution may appear, is an expression of fellowship with the divine in a creative enterprise, and makes for increasing awareness of God.

THE WAY OF MYSTICAL COMMUNION

The excesses which have paraded under the guise of mysticism have brought it into disrepute in the modern world. But, like all good and true things, its abuses cannot permanently eliminate it.

A recent writer has called Jesus “the Master Mystic.” One has only to turn through the Gospel pages at random to find that God was *most intimately real* to Jesus. A glance at his recorded prayers partially reveals this. With one exception in his eight recorded prayers he addressed God as Father.

“Father, glorify thy name.”

“Father, the time has now come; glorify thy Son that thy Son may glorify thee.”

“Holy Father, keep them by the power of thy Name which thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are one.”

"Father, if it please thee, take this cup away from me. But thy will, not mine, be done."

"Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing."

"Father, I trust my spirit to thy hands." Of course the mere titles used in addressing God are not sufficient to indicate the spirit of the one who prays, but in the case of Jesus his use of the intimate term Father fits perfectly the spirit of his life and thought toward God. Nothing in Judæa or Galilee was more real to Jesus than God, the ever-present Father.

The ways of mystical communion are manifold. As between friend and friend, so communion with God is not an altogether unmediated experience. Many, like Wordsworth, look through Nature to Nature's God. To countless millions God's voice has come from the pages of the Bible and from other great literatures of the world. In contemplation and prayer unnumbered hosts have walked into the presence of the divine. God has come to the discerning through personality which is the highest datum in human experience. But the peak of mysticism is reached when we commune with God through Jesus of Nazareth.

THE WAY OF CHRISTO-CENTRIC FAITH

This may be called the way of Christo-centric faith: that is, we find God in Christ. Paul declared that we have access to the Father through Jesus

Christ. One senses throughout Paul's epistles that he is struggling to give adequate expression to his joyous discovery of God in Christ. The difficulty that Paul experienced in this regard has been felt by thousands from his day down to ours.

At least we are beginning to approach this great truth of God in Christ from the right end. We begin with the historic Jesus and by faith in him we discover the Christlike God; whereas many formerly began with a God of abstract thought and then wrestled with the problem of the deity of Jesus. The primary truth is not that God would tell us something about Jesus, but that Jesus would tell us something about God. This is the real historical approach made by the men of the New Testament. Philip said, and we feel the eagerness of his words: "Lord, let us see the Father; that is all we want." Then the reply: "He who has seen me has seen the Father." If, in the quest of God, a man cannot find him in Jesus of Nazareth, his hopes of finding God anywhere are small indeed.

The Incarnation is just another way of saying that within the limits of a genuine human experience men found God. If God cannot be found in human experience, he cannot be found anywhere. No meaningful conception of God can be constructed in terms of non-experience. When we look then for the most significant materials of human experience, we find ourselves unable to think anything higher than the

personal. The most important element of experience is not that we live in a civilization of machines, but in a society of persons. Consequently, our conception of Reality must take account of the *personal* above all other types of experience (which are not to be denied but subordinated). When we turn to search for the highest expression of the *personal*, our quest brings us to Jesus of Nazareth. His life is the story of God told in the language of human experience.

MODERN POLYTHEISM

The word *God* is one of the most ambiguous in the English language. It means anything or nothing according to the thought of the person using the word. A *working* definition of the word is implied in Philippians 3:19 as that which exercises a controlling influence over life and conduct. On the basis of this definition let us frankly acknowledge that in the number of our gods we fare as badly as the *poor heathen* about whom we sing, who "bow down to wood and stone."

Idolatry cannot be confined to images carved from wood and stone. It consists as well in obedience to any *mental image* of God that is less than the revelation of himself in Christ. We are in little danger of committing the sin of idolatry in its ancient form of making "graven images," but we are in constant danger of exalting some of our mental images to the

rank of gods which exercise a controlling influence over life and conduct.

"Self-centredness," national and individual, is one of the deities under whose nostrils we burn the incense of an ignorant patriotism and a boasted superiority.

Another powerful god is "Mammon," before whose grotesque form millions bow down with cringing servility.

There is the god of conventionality, whose authority lies in the assertion that "everybody does it"; and his devotees are a multitude no man can number.

There is Mars, the war god, on whose gruesome altar this generation has poured the blood-libation of thirteen million young lives, and whose worshippers still sit in places of power.

These are not all of our modern gods. We must face with a new seriousness the words of the Fourth Gospel: "And this is eternal life, that they know thee, *the only real God*." Millions of us handle, almost daily, coins which bear the inscription, "In God We Trust." The question that confronts every serious-minded lover of his country is, "which god?"

We must render more than lip-service to this revelation of God in Christ. We must make careful distinctions between the early conceptions of God in the Bible and the final Word of God. Every thought about God in the Bible or out of it must be tested by Jesus' revelation.

There is not a problem which perplexes this genera-

tion, upon which Jesus' Gospel of God does not have an important bearing. To discover this is our task. It is not always easy, but it is always gloriously challenging.

THE APPROACH TO REALITY

The way in which the figure of a Galilean prophet has forced itself upon the attention of successive generations, is not the least remarkable phenomenon of history. The passing generations may differ ever so greatly in their intellectual complexion; they blend into a striking unity in the deference they pay this Man. Since he lived out his short life in a corner of the Roman Empire, no generation has been so blind that it utterly ignored him; none has felt so self-sufficient that it sought to order its life without taking him into consideration; none has been so confident of its social philosophy that it did not seek the prestige of his name to lend it authority.

He has been made into the founder of a brilliant ecclesiasticism whose pomp and power are in strongest contrast to his peasant mode of life. Helpless, as when led through the streets of Jerusalem with a felon's cross upon his back, he has been nailed again and again to the cross of bigotry and prejudice. More than once he has been bound in the graveclothes of theological absurdities, till some have thought him permanently interred; but always he has rolled away

the stone and come forth declaring: "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore."

Every generation has thought about him in terms of its own most deeply felt need. Individuals within every generation, including his own, have put upon his message varying constructions according to their own innermost desires. Those whose desires seldom went beyond loaves and fishes measured his success in terms of his ability to supply their desires. (A full dinner pail and a growing bank account are still offered as proof of supreme achievement in leadership.) Others followed him looking for signs and wonders—sensation seekers! (What better credentials are demanded to-day than the size of the crowd one attracts?)

Peter saw his need in terms of *moral insight* and *character*. When multitudes began to turn away from following him, Jesus began seriously to wonder if any of his generation saw their needs with sufficient depth of understanding to continue in their discipleship with him. And so he turned upon his closest companions with the query, "You do not want to go, too?" Then it was that Simon Peter, searching in the depths of his soul, found his need *and ours!* "Lord, who are we to go to? You have got words of eternal life (*moral insight*), and we believe, we are certain, that you are the holy One of God (*character*)."

These are the credentials that Jesus brings to a

generation in quest of reality to-day. We too, weary of life's shams and irrelevancies, would share his moral penetration. We too would give final proof of the soundness of our moral insight by character that is irreproachable in the light of ultimate values. Deny us these, and, with all our science and machines and sophistication, we cannot better describe our state than to say with unmitigated pessimism: *we are lost*.

Over against this temptation to despair we set the faith that the figure of Jesus stands out more clearly to-day than ever before as the Approach to Reality through the Moral Adventure. In our fellowship with men, in peace and power, in love and life, and in our fellowship with God, he is *the real and living way*.

THE END

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what skill it profits a man if he know all facts
but misses great truths of life.

some of you I am making mad
& some I am saving

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Sinlandia by Sericlus

